

Who is committing the abuse?

A large percentage of the cases APS receives, about 46%, are for self-neglect. Neglect by others is also prevalent. Abusers are typically related to the vulnerable adult and may be adult children or spouses. Abuse can happen with anyone the vulnerable adult has contact with and at any location.

Abuse tends to happen outside of adult care facilities, in the vulnerable adult's own home or home of spouses and relatives.



Do You Suspect Abuse/Neglect?

Call Adult Protective Services:

1-888-APS-TENN

1-888-277-8366

TTY: 1-800-270-1349

Phones are answered between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. EST and CST, Monday through Friday. If you suspect emergency instances of abuse or neglect after these hours, please call 911.

Some identified abusers have been placed on a state abuse registry. To hear a listing of abusers call **1-888-778-4504** and press 2 when prompted.

Tennessee Area Agencies on Aging and Disability may also be an avenue for needed help and resources.

Contact them at **1-866-TENNOPT** or **1-866-836-6678**.

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) policy, Adult Protective Services is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write HHS, Director, Office for Civil Rights, Room 506-F, 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201 or call (202) 619-0403 (Voice) or (202) 619-3257 (TTY). HHS is an equal opportunity provider and employer. You may also write Tennessee Department of Human Services, Office of General Counsel, Citizens Plaza Building, 400 Deaderick Street, Nashville, TN 37243, (615) 313-4700.



Tennessee Department of Human Services, Authorization No. 345696, October 2013, 10,000 copies. This public document was promulgated at a cost of \$0.14 per copy.

Adult Protective Services



Stopping abuse of the elderly and persons with disabilities may start with you.

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN SERVICES



Helping shape Tennessee lives.

What is Adult Protective Services and how does it help?

Adult Protective Services (APS) investigates reports of abuse, neglect (including self-neglect) or financial exploitation of adults. Additionally, APS makes referrals to resources within the community for further assistance and to help keep the individual in the safest environment.

Who does APS serve?

APS is not just for the elderly. APS is here to help adults 18 years of age or older who because of a mental or physical disability or advanced age are unable to care for themselves.

Examples include being unable to:

- Manage their own resources
- Carry out activities of daily living
- Protect themselves from neglect or self-neglect
- Avoid hazardous or abusive situations without assistance from others

They may be in need of protective services.

Notice when someone you know needs help. If you suspect a person you know is a victim of abuse, neglect, self-neglect or financial exploitation; it is your legal obligation to notify Adult Protective Services at: **1-888-APS-TENN or 1-888-277-8366**

Know the signs.

Physical abuse

- Bruising, especially on the torso or head
- Frequent injuries, with the excuse of “accidents”
- Signs of being restrained, such as rope marks on wrists

Emotional abuse

- Isolation of the vulnerable adult or refusal to allow visits with the vulnerable adult alone
- Threatening, belittling or controlling behavior by the caregiver that you see
- Behavior that mimics dementia, such as rocking, sucking or mumbling
- Outbursts or extreme anger or punishment like the silent treatment

Sexual abuse

- Frequent genital or urinary tract irritation and infections
- Indication of bruising to genitals, upper torso or upper thighs
- Vulnerable adult indicates discomfort with caretaker while bathing, dressing or toileting
- Vulnerable adult has little or no privacy for bathing or dressing which bothers him or her

Neglect (including self-neglect)

- Unusual weight loss, malnutrition, dehydration
- Untreated physical problems, such as bed sores
- Unsanitary living conditions: dirt, bugs, soiled bedding and clothes
- Being left un-bathed
- Unsuitable clothing or covering for the weather
- Unsafe living conditions (no heat or running water; faulty electrical wiring, other fire hazards)
- Desertion of the vulnerable adult at a public place

Financial exploitation

- Sudden changes in the vulnerable adult's financial condition
- Items or cash missing from the vulnerable adult's household
- Sudden or unexplained changes in wills, power of attorney, titles, and policies
- Financial activity the vulnerable adult couldn't have done, such as an ATM withdrawal when the account holder is bedridden
- No food in the home, the utilities are cut off, and the home is not maintained